II. *Tribe, Groups and Clans.*

101/618 It is necessary first of all to define clearly the precise meaning of these three terms.

We reserve the term *tribe* for the totality of the Thonga nation. This word is frequently used to designate the smaller national units, which are called after some old chief whose descendants are still reigning, like Tembe, Khosa, Nkuna, etc. We prefer for the sake of clearness to call these small units *clans*, as there is certainly a great resemblance between them and the Scottish clans. As a rule all men belonging to a clan bear the name of the old chief, who is more or less considered the ancestor of them all. In the Tembe country, most of the inhabitants will salute each other with these words : "Shawan Tembe, good morning, Tembe" ! But Tembe, the name of the clan, means not only a group of people, but a certain part of the country south of Delagoa Bay. In that country men of other clans have settled. There are also sub-clans of the Tembe clan which have already adopted special salutations, because they have formed collateral branches of the big Tembe family. However the term *clan* is the best, I think, to designate this kind of national unit, as its origin is essentially familial. Now some of these clans, those which occupy the same tract of country, form *groups* because they speak the same dialect of the Thonga language.

III. *The generic Name of the Tribe.*

101/619 As we shall see, there is no true national unity amongst the Thongas (1). They are hardly conscious that they form a definite

193 (1) What orthography are we to adopt when using the Bantu proper names in the plural? Different systems are used in ethnographic books, but the following appears to me the most rational. When a Bantu proper name is used with its plural prefix, the addition of a final *s* is not justified ; but in that case the prefix ought to be separated from the root by a hyphen, in order that the uninitiated reader may understand at once that he is dealing with a plural. Thus I would write : Ama-Zulu, Ba-Ronga, etc.

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101/619 nation, and therefore they possess no common name for it. The name *Thonga* (pronounce *t* + aspirated *h*, not the English *th*) was applied to them by the Zulu or Ngoni invaders, who enslaved most of their clans between 1815 and 1830. The origin of this Zulu name is probably the term *Ronga*, which means Orient (buronga = dawn) and by which the clans round Lourenço Marques used to call themselves. According to the phonetic laws of the two languages *R* in Ronga becomes *Th* when pronounced by the Zulus. (Ex. Randja, to love, in Ronga, is thanda in Zulu ; raru, three, thathu.) This word Thonga became a nickname which, in the mouth of the Zulus, was almost the equivalent of slave, and they applied it to the whole Thonga stock ; the appellation is not liked by the Thongas, but I know of no other which would be preferable to it.

Strange to say, the Thongas of the Northern Clans, especially those of the Bilen and Djonga groups, like to call themselves *Tjongas*, the Hlengwes *Tsongas*. This word is perhaps originally the same as Ronga and may have meant also people of the East, although the *R* of the Ronga dialect does not permute regularly into *Tj* and *Ts* in the Northern clans ; but this meaning is doubtful, and has at any rate been forgotten. Another name, which is much used amongst white people to designate the Thongas, is the word *Shangaan*. Shangaan or Tshangaan was one of the surnames of Manukosi, the Zulu chief who settled on the East Coast and subjugated most of the Thongas at the time of Chaka. It is possible that this name was even older, and that it belonged to a chief who lived in the valley of the Lower Limpopo before Manukosi. At any rate, this valley was called Ka Tshangaan and its inhabitants Matshangaan. But this term was never accepted by the Ba-Ronga, who consider it as an

193 (in the singular : Mu-Ronga, Mu-Sutho), but never Ama-Zulus, Ba-Rongas. As however ordinary readers are not acquainted with Bantu grammar, I think it is more advisable to use these Bantu proper names without their prefixes, treating them as if they were English words, and, in that case it is necessary to add the final *s*, as we generally do according to the rules of European spelling. Many writers do not adopt this system in their books ; but write the plural in exactly the same form as the singular, and it is therefore impossible to distinguish between the two. This may lead to confusion. I therefore propose to write : a Thonga, the Thongas, one Hlengwe, two Hlengwes, but it should be remembered that the final *s* must not be pronounced.

197 193 The Thonga idiom belongs to the *South-Eastern group of the Bantu languages* and is related both to Sutho and Zulu. All these languages have in common certain grammatical features which distinguish them from other groups. Amongst them I may mention the frequent use of the lateral sounds *hl*, *dl*, *tl*, the presence of seven or eight distinct classes of nouns, recognizable by prefixes which correspond to each other in these three languages, the formation of the locative by a suffix *ini* or *ng* and not by prefixes, the consequent absence of the three locative classes pa, ku, mu, etc. It has been asserted by people who have not studied Thonga carefully that it is merely a dialect of Zulu. This is not true (1). Thonga is altogether different from Zulu and Sutho, though it closely resembles both, especially Zulu.

194 197 *Relation to Sutho.* As regards Sutho, its phonetic system is characterised by the absence of a certain phenomenon common to most Bantu languages, to Thonga and Zulu especially. The Bantu phonology is dominated by a peculiar nasalisation of certain consonants when prefixed by an *n* or an *m*. This *n* or *m* is generally the prefix of the class mu-ba, mu-mi or in-tin (zin), and has the power of producing marvellous changes in this initial consonant. But, in Sutho, this prefix is dropped altogether except in a few cases, and these nasalised sounds are almost entirely lacking. As regards some other grammatical features, Sutho, especially the Pedi dialect of Sutho, is not so far from Thonga. It is not possible to quote many instances; let us only remark that Sutho possesses the roots *loya* for witchcraft and *yila* for taboo which are also present in Thonga and are lacking in Zulu.

Relation to Zulu. The great difference between Thonga and Zulu as regards phonetics is the complete absence of the three characteristic Zulu clicks (2) in Thonga. The Thongas have no

(1) Thongas and Zulus *do not understand* each other. In linguistic terminology, I think one ought never to designate as a dialect of a language an idiom which people speaking that language cannot understand at all. It is then a different language altogether, and we ought to keep the term dialect for the various forms of a single language which are of such a nature that people speaking them can understand each other more or less perfectly.

(2) The Zulu clicks are, as is generally believed, of Hottentot origin. It is not surprising therefore that they were not adopted by the Thongas, who do not seem to have had any contact with Hottentots.

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194 clicks at all except in a few words borrowed from the Zulu like
197 nqolo, wagon. Certain letters regularly permute from one language into the other : *Z* of the Zulu is *t* in Thonga ; *r* of the Thonga is generally replaced by *l* or *th* in Zulu.

Originality of Thonga. But though Thonga and Zulu resemble each other in many respects, Thonga possesses some peculiar features which prove its originality. As regards its sounds, it is characterised by the frequent occurrence of a labial sibilant sound, a little like *ps* pronounced with a kind of whistling, which corresponds to the Zulu *z* in the plural of the class isi-izi. It is further characterised by some special nasalisations of initial consonants. *N+k*, which remains *nk* in Zulu, becomes *h* in Thonga : for instance the Zulu *nkosi*, chief, is *hosi* in Thonga. (It is *Khushi* in Sutho-Pedi where the initial *n* has been dropped). There is a long list of words of the in-tin class which show this phenomenon (homu, ox ; huku, hen, etc.). The initial *r* when preceded by *n* becomes *nh* (*nh*ena, warrior ; tin*h*aru, three ; cf. raru, three, burena, bravery, morena, in Sutho, chief). This seems to be the primitive combination. In some other cases it becomes *ntjh* in Ronga and *ndj* in Djonga (rako, behind, *ntjh*ako, *ndj*ako). These two *r* have probably a different origin in the Ur-Bantu. These transformations are peculiar to Thonga.

193 As regards morphology, Thonga has some striking peculiarities : a great variety of demonstrative forms due to the presence of a kind of demonstrative particle *le* or *la* and also a great development of the participial forms of the verbs. In its conjugation, the verb is quite as well provided with auxiliaries as in any other South African language and we could easily discover in Thonga the one or two thousand combinations which have been counted in the Zulu conjugation.

Thonga, for all these reasons, is a language apart which has developed with its different dialects.

197 *The six dialects.* We have tried to classify them under six names, but this classification is, of course, purely formal : in fact each of them presents transition forms, and they coalesce with each other through a great number of intermediary

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FIRST PART

THE LIFE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

CHAPTER I

THE EVOLUTION OF A MAN FROM BIRTH TO DEATH

A. INFANCY

1. *The day of Birth.*

When a new member of the tribe is expected, when the mother begins to feel the pangs of childbirth (ku luñwa), the father sends word to the midwives of the neighbourhood and all of them come at once. They are called *tinsungakati* (1). Every woman having some experience in this department is a midwife, no special training being required for the qualification (2).

The *place chosen* for the delivery (phuluka) is generally the back of the hut (mahosi) where the pregnant woman lives. Some mats are brought and hung up in such a way as to form a smal

(1) This word is interesting. Its termination *ati* is the proper feminine suffix wh is found in nsati, wife, hulukati, female elephant, Nkomati, the river of that nam the rivers being considered as female by the Thongas.

(2) Amongst certain Thonga clans, especially the Khosas of Magude, there is a person who is bound to come and assist the woman in childbirth : this is the mukoñwana lo' nkulu of her husband i. e. the woman who has been bought with her husband's oxen. The woman in labour leans her head on this woman's chest, whilst the other midwives help her in parturition. When the Rev. F. Paillard went to assist a woman during labour, the "mukoñwana lo' nkulu" told him : "You have taken my place." See Part II. Ch. I. B. 3).

601 193 Grammatically speaking, most of the Thonga terms of kinship belong to the class mu-ba, the personal class. They form their plural in *ba* (batatana, bana, bamakwabu, batukulu). Some however are of the class yin-tin which comprises mostly animals, but also names of trades and of family relations : Ndjisana, nhondjwa, namu, nhombe, nhlantsa forming their plural in *ti*. The five following terms, Tatana, Mamana, Rarana, Malume, Kokwana, are treated as proper nouns when they are used as such. , For instance when I say Tatana, it means *my* father, the one to whom this term applies par excellence. In this case Tatana is not preceeded by the initial vowel *a* or *e*, which is always prefixed to the common nouns (See Elementary Grammar ot the Thonga-Shangaan Language, page 26 § 65). If I wish to say "his father," I should say : Atatana wa kwe (Ro.), or Etata wa yena (Dj.) etc.

B. EXPLANATION OF THONGA TERMS OF RELATIONSHIP

602 Let us go deeper into the study of each of these terms, trying to ascertain their principal and derivative meanings. We shall consult the three genealogies here given, those of Tobane (A), of Mboza (B) and of his wife Nsabula (C), endeavouring to ascertain not only the social but also the moral relation existing between these several people. There are two kinds of relationship : blood relationship or consanguinity and marriage relationship, relationship on the wife's side or affinity. Amongst blood relatives, there are two categories which differ more from each other amongst the Bantus than amongst us, relatives on the father's side and on the mother's side. On the father's side, the relatives are called bakweru (Ro.), barikweru (Dj.), those of our home ; and on the mother's side, bakokwana, the ancestors.

We shall consider each of these three relationships separately, though it will be found impossible to isolate them entirely from each other. In each of them, we shall find two sets of terms : terms of correspondence and of reciprocity. We shall see also

197 the Bantu languages are so similar that conclusions drawn from one of them apply to most of the tribes, *mutatis mutandis*. At any rate Sutho, Zulu, Chopi, Venda, and Thonga are very much akin, as regards their structure, forming as they do the South Eastern group of Bantu languages ; and, though the Central or Western groups differ on certain points, it may be asserted that the Bantu dialects present a remarkable uniformity.

My aim is not, by any means, to enter upon a grammatical study. This has been done for most of our South African languages, and the linguist who wishes to learn Thonga can use the Grammaire Ronga, or the Elementary Thonga-Shangaan Grammar already referred to. Leaving aside all technicalities, I shall now only attempt to show what the language reveals as regards the Bantu intellect. Let us, on this important question, take the testimony of the Noun, the Verb, the Conjunction and the Adverb.

A. THE NOUN AND THE POWER OF CLASSIFICATION.

● 198 The Bantu system of Nouns shows that the Bantu intellect possesses the *Power of classification*. All nouns are divided into a certain number of classes or genders, seven or eight in the South Eastern group, as many as ten in the Central groups ; these classes are known by their singular and plural prefixes, which are very similar in all dialects. What is the system of classification which these Genders denote? The Indo-Germanic languages divide natural objects into two categories, male and female, and, in most cases, add a third category, the neuter. They are *sex-denoting* languages, as Bleek used to call them. Nothing of this kind is met with amongst the Bantus (1). They follow an entirely different

(1) The Thongas, however, possesses a feminine suffix *ati* (eti, etsi) corresponding to a feminine prefix *mi* (l. p. 36). This suffix is found in nsati, wife, rarakati, paternal aunt, hulukati, female elephant, hweti, moon, nyeleti, star, mati (?) water, etc. It appears in many names of rivers : Nkomati, Nwebeti, Nwanetsi, Selati, Nfoloti, Shingwedzi, etc. Other names of rivers belong to the li-tin or ri-tin class : Limbelule (Oliphant) Limpopo, Lisuthu, Letsitele (Ritshindjele), Ritabi (Great Tabie), etc.

system. As a matter of fact, it is very difficult to understand it fully. These languages have already undergone a long process of evolution, and, just as it is impossible to state why a French word like "*chemin*" is masculine and another word like *route* is feminine, so the reason why such and such a noun belongs to such and such a class is not always apparent. However, as a whole, the Bantu system of classification is much more rational than the Indo-Germanic. I shall not study it etymologically, viz., by searching for the original meaning of the prefixes, a very difficult task which has been accomplished by Prof. Meinhof, who had at his disposal an enormous quantity of material for comparison. I shall only consider it in its broad features, as it now presents itself in the living language, and I assert that it reveals a true power of classification.

The Bantu mind divides natural objects into seven or eight categories :

1) *Personal beings*, which are classified by prefixing *mu* (n) in the singular and *ba* in the plural, thus forming the first class, the class *mu-ba* ; munhu, man, nuna, husband, nsati, wife, etc. This class is so clearly defined in the Bantu mind that new objects bearing a personal character are immediately incorporated into it : e. g. mulungu, White man, muhanu, White woman (from an Indian word). Animals which behave like rational beings in folk tales are also removed from their class into the mu-ba class by prefixing *Ñwa* to their names, and innumerable verbal nouns are formed by prefixing *mu* to the verbal stem, if they designate persons (e. g. ku fa, to die, mufi, the dead man).

2) The second class, *mu-mi*, designates *trees* ; almost all trees belong to it (I. p. 397), and those recently introduced into the country have been named according to this rule, e. g. manga, mimanga, the mango tree. It is true that we find a number of other things with the prefix of the tree-class : the wind (moya), and similar objects (mumu, heat, ndjilo, fire, mpfuka, space, nkari, time), the body (miri) and some of its organs (nomo, the lip, nenge, the leg). But trees are the characteristic element of this class.

3) The third class, *yin-tin* (Zulu in-izin, Sutho (n)-li) is evidently that of *animals*. Ninety per cent of these belong to it ; and

193 though a number of other objects have these prefixes (different degrees of affinity for instance : namu, ndjisana, etc., I. p. 223), this is definitely the animal class.

4) The fourth class (*dji-ma* (Ro.), *ri-ma* (Dj.), Zulu : ili-ama, Sutho : le-ma) is that of *fruits*, and new fruits are constantly incorporated into it (e. g. malalandji, oranges). Many other categories of objects are found in this class : natural objects, hard, shining (pala, skull ; rambu, bone ; fumu, thlari, assagai ; dambu, sun) and things grouped together. It may be that the prefix *ma* originally applied to objects conveying the idea of duality (mahlo, eyes ; mabele, breasts ; maboko, arms ; mahahla, twins) ; but in the present state of the language fruits seem to me to be the characteristic feature of this class.

5) The fifth class (*li-tin* (Ro.), *ri-tin* (Dj.), ulu-izi (Zulu) is most difficult to define and seems to be tending to become obsolete : it is wanting in Sutho, and nearly so in Djonga. I call it the class of *organs*, at any rate of organs of an elongated form (lidjimi, tongue ; libambo, rib ; likhongotlo, spine, etc.). The primitive idea may be that of length.

6.7.8) The sixth, seventh and eighth classes bear a strongly neuter character : the sixth (*bu-ma*, Zulu ubu-ama, Sutho bo-ma) designates *abstract notions* derived from adjectives or verbs (bukulu, greatness), the seventh (*shi-psi*, Zulu isi-izi, Sutho se-li) *instruments* and the eighth (*ku*, Zulu uku, Sutho hu) *actions*. This is the verbal class, the infinitive of the verb, ku famba, meaning the march as well as to march.

The class bu-ma may also be called the class of *liquids*, as most liquids belong to it (bukanyi, buputju, etc. See I. p. 397).

Considering the principal meaning of these eight classes, we can state that, whatever may be the origin of the prefixes, the present-day Bantus, at any rate the Thongas, classify natural objects as : personal beings, trees, animals, fruits, organs, liquids, abstract notions, instruments, actions, other objects being incorporated into one or other of these classes in a more or less arbitrary way.

That this is a true classificatory system, every one speaking one of these languages will be able to testify ; instinctively one

incorporates new objects into the fitting class, or one uses the prefixes in the formation of new words according to their classifying value. The power of classification of the Bantu mind is certainly not inferior to that of Aryans. 193●

B. THE VERB AND THE POWER OF COMBINATION.

The Bantu verb has no inflexion ; Bantu languages belong to the agglutinative type, viz., they express the various tenses and moods of the verb not by a change of the root, but by the addition of verbal elements, either prefixes or suffixes. But these additions are so varied, and can express such subtle ideas, that the student of Bantu languages stands amazed at the powers of combination which they reveal. It is impossible here to prove this assertion by technical examples, but I can assert that any one conversant with the use of these verbal principles is able to express all the ideas which are conveyed by the conjugation of inflective verbs and a good many more. It is no exaggeration to speak of the thousands of combinations of the Bantu conjugation.

To illustrate the power of combination of the Bantu mind, I need only refer the linguist to the wonderful set of verbal derivatives which are to be found. Take the simple form *ku bona*, to see. We may derive from it the passive *boniwa*, to be seen ; two qualificatives, *boneka* and *bonakala*, to be visible ; the applicative *bonela*, to see for somebody else, to take care of ; the causative, *bonisa*, to cause somebody to see ; the intensive, *bonisisa*, to see perfectly well ; the reciprocal, *bonana*, to see each other ; the reflexive, *tibona*, to see oneself. The reversive is still to be mentioned, as *pakula*, to unload (from pakela, to load). All these various derivations may be combined according to given laws, each adding its own meaning to the others. So, from *ku tira*, to work, can be formed *tirelana*, the applicative reciprocal, to serve each other, *tireriwa*, applicative passive, to be served, *tirisiwa*, to be made to work, etc. An endless number of combinations is thus rendered possible.

C. CONJUNCTIONS AND THE POWER OF ARGUMENT.

●193 Thonga conjunctions co-ordinate ideas rather than subordinate them to each other and this may certainly be regarded as a proof that the language has reached a less advanced stage of development than our modern Indo-European languages.

The conjunction which answers to our "that" and "in order to" is *lepsaku*. This word comes from the demonstrative pronoun *lepsi*, followed by the genitive particle *a* and by the verb *ku*, to say. It therefore means etymologically "that is to say," Let me give two examples : "I believe that he has gone : Ndja kholwa lepsaku a fambile." The exact translation would be : I believe that is to say he has gone. "I eat in order to find strength : Ndja dya lepsaku ndji kuma matimba," literally : I eat that is to say I find strength. The two ideas are presented as parallel, co-ordinate, not as subordinated one to the other. In the Ronga dialect however "in order that" is rather expressed by *akuba* i. e. to be or to become, which implies more or less the idea of an aim ; but this conjunction is not followed by a conjunctive form of the verb.

A similar deficiency consists in the fact that *when* and *if* are not differentiated from each other, both these ideas being expressed by the conjunction *loko* which is merely the demonstrative pronoun of the neutral class *ku* employed in a wider sense ; I never succeeded in finding a true word to express the abstract notion of *condition*.

We ought not, however, to conclude from these facts that the Bantu mind is still in the "prelogic stage" which the sociological school attributes to primitive mentality. There exist in the language a number of other conjunctions which show that the Native method of reasoning is not very different from our own. *Because* is rendered by *hikuva* or *hikuba*, lit. by to be ; *therefore, then* (French donc) by *hi-lepso* or *hi-lepso-ke*, lit. by this, and this little word *ke* is sometimes pronounced with a peculiar movement of the index finger which proves that the speaker has as much pleasure in asserting his conclusion as Cicero when he reached the end of his argument and uttered a victorious *ergo*! The syllogism

is not unknown to the Bantus though they may not have clearly thought out all its rules. It is true that logical reasoning is often interfered with amongst these primitive peoples by the mystic associations which Mr. Lévy-Brühl describes in his books on *Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures* and *La Mentalité Primitive*, interfered with also by emotional factors or by the intervention of the will ; this unfortunately happens in non-primitive races also. But as regards the mechanism of reasoning, I do not think there is any great difference between the Bantu mind and the mind of more civilized peoples. 193

At any rate the power of co-ordination disclosed in the Bantu languages is extremely large and gives these languages a remarkable clearness. Its main feature is this : the prefix of the noun is used to form all the adjectives and pronouns connected with it, as will be clearly seen from the following sentence :

Tjadlopfu	*le*ttayingi	*ta*	tiko	*ti*	khalutile :	hi *tone*
The elephants	numerous	of	the land	they	have passed :	It is they,

hi *teleti*,	le'*ti*	bonekaka	mutjweu	wa	*tone*.
it is these	which	are visible	in the forest	of	them.

This is what grammarians have called the Euphonic Concord. It is certainly *euphonic*, bringing about frequent alliterations which are pleasing to the ear, and at any rate prevent misunderstanding, as they help us to realise, at once, to which noun the pronouns and adjectives refer.

D. ADVERBS AND THE POWER OF DESCRIPTION.

The Adverbs of place, manner, time, etc., form a very interesting study ; they show the presence of remnants of the three locative classes, *pa*, *mu* and *ku*, which still flourish in Central African languages, and have become obsolete in those of South Africa (*kandle*, outside ; *kansi*, on the ground ; *kase*, on the other border ; *namdjuku*, to morrow ; *kaya*, at home ; etc.) and this seems to 192

192 certain number of them are real onomatopoeiae, i. e. words resembling the sound made by the thing of which they are the names. The term adopted by the Rev. R. Godfrey, Primary or Strong Stems, has been severely criticised by the Rev. W. Bourquin (see Christian Express, August and September 1916) and it would seem that this expression Primary must at any rate not be taken to mean that these words necessarily belong to the oldest elements of the language. A considerable proportion of the Kafir descriptive adverbs (60-70 %) bear the trace of a Hottentot or Bushman origin. It would however be an error to conclude from this fact that these words, amongst the Bantus, have been borrowed from the non-Bantu races. They abound in Thonga and Thonga has not been in any way influenced by the Bushmen and the Hottentots. But there is still another fact which proves that the descriptive adverbs have not been inherited from the *Ur-Bantu* ; as far as I am able to judge, the Kafir descriptive adverbs are totally different from those of the Thongas (1). There ought on the other hand to be many common to both languages (which have a great number of common roots as regards nouns, adjectives and verbs) if the present descriptive adverbs had really been used in the mother tongue. For all these reasons the term Descriptive Adverbs seems to me the best and should professional grammarians not wish to adopt it, I would suggest that they should be considered as words having no true equivalents in our more polished European languages and therefore as forming a new category, a new species to be added to the classical eight parts of speech! After all, language is not made for Grammar, but Grammar for language ! And we Europeans cannot claim to have found all the forms of expression of which the human mind is capable. If the Bantus have discovered another class of words which render them great service, why should we proclaim them as unworthy of consideration and exclude them from the written language?

193 For linguists, I add a few particulars concerning the grammatical nature of these words and the importance they may have had in the evolution of human speech. The intonation, the gesture, accompanying these adverbs of course greatly assist in understanding their meaning. Sometimes the word is *short*, ends sharply, as *gi*, a blow on a pole to drive it into the earth ; or it is *prolonged* as *ra-a-a*, the unrolling of a

(1) It is not possible to pronounce a definite judgment on this question as the lists of Kafir and Thonga descriptive adverbs which we possess are far from being complete. Full lists of these interesting particles in all the languages ought to be compiled by Bantu grammarians as soon as possible for purposes of comparison.

mat which drags along the ground ; or *repeated* many times, when the action consists in a series of repeated motions : *ngiri-ngiri-ngiri*, walking down to the spruit. From the etymological point of view, some adverbs may be termed *primitive* and others *derivative*. Amongst the primitive are, for instance, *dzi*, the act of planting (hence the verb ku dzima), *nyupe*, the act of plunging (hence ku nyupela), etc. But others are distinctly derivative, for instance : *humelelo*, the impression caused by somebody who suddenly appears. This is certainly derived from the verb ku humelela, which is itself the double applicative derivative of ku huma, to come out ; ku humelela means, according to the law of verbal derivation, to be produced, to happen, to arrive, to appear. Hence the descriptive adverb. Other instances of such derivations are : *retemuku*, *rendjeleku*, *tlheriso*, *woloko*, *khabutelo*. They are generally long words (though all the long ones are by no means derivatives). A regular means of derivation even seems to consist in the addition of the suffix *iyani* to the infinitive of the verb ; so a man "says" *yetleliyani*, he sleeps, (from ku yetlela, to sleep) ; *yimisiyani*, he stands erect (from ku yima, to stand). It would seem as if people had found so much pleasure in expressing their ideas by this picturesque method that they even convert regular verbs into descriptive adverbs ! 193

I must further mention that some of these adverbs, placed between the verb *ku* and the adverb, as shown in the following examples, have a true transitive nature and may be preceded by a direct object, especially those which express actions. Ex.: A ku *shi* wuyuwuyu, he throws *that* away ; a ku *mu* mpsi, he makes *him* mpsi, he binds him ; even the verbal reflective prefix *ti* (which is a kind of invariable pronoun) can be used in this connexion. Ex.: A ku *ti* mpsi, he ties himself. Some are at the same time transitive and intransitive, according to the sense. Ex.: A ku *kwe-kwe*, he drags his leg ; (a way of walking) ; a ku yi kwe, he drags it (the pole) ; (a transitive action).

In Kafir these particles are capable of modifying their meaning considerably owing to the fact that the auxiliary *ukuti* to which they are appended can adopt the derivative verbal forms called by Godfrey the reciprocal, the relative, the stative and the reflexive. This is not possible with the Thonga auxiliary ku ; I have only met with the reflexive ti, and this was not prefixed to the auxiliary as in Kafir but to the adverb itself.

In Kafir as in Thonga many of these words give rise to regular verbs. This fact, which is one more proof of their importance and is highly interesting, would alone substantiate my contention that they should be 192

to the sacrifice of the black victim and to the mbelele rite of purification of the land, which are characteristic Thonga customs, it seems that another old Thonga way of obtaining rain was the *tjeba fishing* which I described on p. 86. When the whole clan had gone to catch the barbels in the almost dried up ponds, a thunderstorm would come and rain would fall. This was especially the case with certain small lakes such as Malangotiba in Nondwane, and that in Nsime near Morakwen, because battles had taken place on their borders and the enemies' corpses had been thrown into the water. So these lakes had become "great sacred woods" (ntimu). I suppose the spirits of the deceased, which were certainly "gods of bitterness," (see next chapter), were supposed to prevent the rain, and the *tjeba* either appeased them or made them powerless.

To sum up this very complicated subject, I would say rain rites belong to three different categories: 1) The religious rites connected with ancestor worship (black offering, visit to the sacred woods, old songs and sometimes offering of a human victim). 2) Rites of purification of the land, those which are derived from the mysterious relations established between the power of Heaven and abnormal births (mbelele, cleaning of wells by women accompanied by the mother of twins); these present some features of the ordinary passage rites, either because the fall of rain inaugurates a new season, or because drought is a calamity comparable with death and attended with contamination. 3) The magic rites, in which sea charms play the most important part.

Hail, shihangu (Dj.), mabyana, lit. little stones (Ro.), is frequent in Thongaland; according to Mboza, it is not the object of any peculiar superstitions. Amongst the Pedis the day on which it has fallen must be kept as a sabbath. It is taboo to till the fields on that day.

IV. *The Inorganic World.*

Water is called *mati*, a noun of the bu-ma class, the class of liquids, employed only in the plural form. Notice the suffix *ti*, which seems to show that, at a period when mythological

193 conceptions were still current, it was considered as a feminine principle. This supposition is confirmed by the fact that *rivers* (nambu. pl. milambu) also have the feminine termination (I. p. 36, Note). I find the following names of rivers ending in *ti* : Nkomati, Nfoloti (Umbelosi), Ñwebeti, Shalati, Timbati ; the termination *etsi, edzi*, may be another form of the same suffix (Ñwanetsi, Ntsatsi, Shingwedzi, Madzi, etc.). A very curious fact, which shows the same conception, is that the river which crosses the territory of the Tembe clan is called Mi-Tembe. I first thought this to be a plural form of the mu-mi class ; but it is more natural to explain this *mi* as the feminine prefix (1) which means daughter of, as Migogwe, etc. (I. p. 352).

823 784 824 789 133 *Crossing rivers* is subject to a curious rule. It is taboo to bathe in the stream before crossing it ; taboo also for the traveller to cook his food on the hither side of the river ; he must first cross, and then take his meal. This rule is still universally observed by waggon trekkers in South Africa. In this case there may be a reason for the taboo : South African rivers are apt to be swollen in a moment by sudden rain, and the crossing made impossible for days : the traveller therefore makes haste ; he will have plenty of time to stop on the other side! When the river is dangerous, a Thonga will first chew (phora) a little of his *ndjao*, the root of a juncus, which is supposed to increase courage and to ensure victory over hostile influences. (See Part VI.)

823 769 776 782 Some *Lakes* and *Rivers* are believed to be inhabited by spirits, but not in the ordinary fetichistic way, in which a special spiritual being is incorporated with the natural object ; these spirits are *psikwembo*, spirits of the deceased ancestors of the owners of the land, and are propitiated by their descendants. Should another clan have invaded the territory where these lakes are, and crocodiles threaten the fishermen, (p. 88) they will call some one belonging to the clan of the old possessors of the country and ask him to make an offering to appease *his* gods. This is the ordinary course, and the more closely we search the more completely these lake and

(1) A number of river names have the prefix *li* or *ri*, especially those which are of Sutho origin : Lebvubye. Ritabi (Letaba) Ritshindjele (Letsitele), Rimbelule (Lepalula, Olifant). Others begin with *ñwa, ma*, and may be ancient names of men.

826 Monkeys are thought to be degenerate human beings, who have lost the habit of working and tilling fields, and thus fallen into their present miserable condition.

815 192 The collection of Native names of animals which I have compiled is interesting ; first from the linguistic point of view, for purposes of comparison. Bantu philology needs such lists of words on which to base its conclusions. Let me point out that there seems to be a great uniformity in the various South African dialects as regards the names of large animals, the root being the same although the names have been differentiated by the regular phonetic permutations (1) ; names of trees, on the contrary, vary very much, even from one Thonga clan to the other. But these names also interest us as throwing some light on the Bantu conceptions of Nature. The notion of *genus* is not so marked as amongst plants. It is not, however, absent. The different kinds of ducks are called *sekwa*, sekwa-nyari, sekwa-mhala, the word sekwa being a true genus name. The notion of *order* may even be discovered in the classification of mammalia made by Mankhelu when he said : "Women eat only the flesh of animals having *hoofs*, and not that of animals having *paws*" (p. 83).

193 It is curious to inquire to which of the grammatical classes these names belong. Most of them are of the *yin-tin* class, the animal class proper. Torrend makes a connection between the prefix *tin* and the stem *psala*, to beget, to bring forth, and this may be correct. But many are of the *dji-ma* class, which often contains objects forming groups ; animals roaming in companies, as well as the regiments of the army (mabotshu, mabandla, I. p. 456), frequently belong to this class. (Sekwa, duck ; sowa, sparrow ; khoti, vulture ; hanshi, the horse of White people, of the cavalry, etc.). Some mammalia have the personal prefix *ba* for the plural. The mu-ba prefixes are always employed in tales when the animal is personified ; in the few cases here referred to, however, *ba* is used without any idea of personifying the animal ; the bat, the fox and a kind of red antelope (mangulwe) are designated in this way, and I

(1) Compare the names in my list with the Zulu and Nyandja names collected by Miss Werner in the *Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie*. Jan. April 1911.

193 am really unable to give any reason for the fact. A few other names of animals begin with *bu*, the singular prefix in the bu-ma class, which has evidently a collective meaning. *Busuna* is the immense number of mosquitoes which one hears buzzing in the night during the rainy season, whilst one mosquito is *nsuna*, pl. tinsuna ; *busukoti* is the crowd of ants swarming in the ants'nest, whilst *nsukoti*, (cl. yin-tin) is one ant, etc.

Phot. A. Burd.

Gebuza, whose nose was torn off by a hyena.

815 Thus, amongst the Bantus, scientific knowledge of animals is still in a very primitive stage and may be compared to that possessed, for instance, by the author of Leviticus.

825 On the other hand, the animal world is not in their eyes so far removed from man as it is with us. Man lives in close connection with the animals, not only when he hunts them and tries to transform himself into "a thing of the bush" (p. 79), but even in ordinary life, and considers them as very similar to himself. For instance, some Thongas believe that animals have a *language*, and try to speak to them. I have already mentioned Pikinini ; he was a boy from the Bilen country who stayed with me for a time at Shiluvane, having left Bilene after the defeat of Gungunyana. As he

771 easy to perceive. In the quartz of the South African veldt, miners, in their investigations, sometimes strike a reef : they crush the hard stone, wash it, apply to it certain chemical tests and find there is gold in the reef. This is similar to an experience which I once had when conversing with Thonga natives. Quite unexpectedly I heard them speaking of *Heaven*, not as a kind of impersonal being, but as a king, endowed with great power and omniscience, who must be feared by thieves, because he knows them. Persevering in my inquiries, I discovered this second set of religious intuitions, quite distinct from the first, viz., the *Deistic Conception of Heaven*. I intend now to describe these two parts of the Thonga religious system. Later on we may discuss their relation to each other. "System" is perhaps too big a word, for no Native philosopher or theologian has ever classified this somewhat confused mass of religious ideas, and we must not look for anything logical and organic. We may even meet with contradictions, conflicting statements... While trying to bring some order into the subject, I will endeavour at the same time to give a faithful and reverent explanation of Native ideas.[1]

A. ANCESTROLATRY.

1. *The Ancestor-Gods (Psikwembu).*

1) THE NAME OF THE ANCESTOR-GODS.

769 Any man who has departed this earthly life, becomes a
776 *shikwembu*, a god. We shall show, later on, that to translate
193 "shikwembu" by god (with a small "g") is by no means incorrect. The word is indeed interesting, but unhappily no light is thrown on it by etymology. It belongs to the shi-psi class, the class of instruments. Take the verb "famba" to walk ; put the prefix "shi" in front of it, and change the final "a" into "o" and you obtain "shifambo" — "the thing with which one walks!" So shikwembu would mean "the thing with which one *kwemba*." Only this

[1] [For complete discussion of Thonga religion, see pp. 372-450, category 116.-- Analyst]

stem *kwemba* is never used, and its meaning is unknown. There is another form, *nkwembu*, of the class mu-mi, very rarely used, and having the same meaning, and the word *bukwembu*, the abstract noun derived from the same root. Bukwembu is the "power which creates life and death, which gives riches, or which makes poor," says Viguet. In Pedi the ancestor-gods are called *badimo*, a word which seems to be related to *Khedimo* (above, in heaven). But I have heard this connection doubted (1). In Zulu the etymology of *indhlozi* and *itongo*, employed to designate the ancestor-gods, is also unknown, which is a pity, as it would have been interesting to see if the stem from which they come also means above. Is it not strange that in these three closely-connected languages the terms used for the spirits, about which they have exactly the same ideas, are absolutely without any linguistic relation? In Sutho, these spirits belong to the class "mu-ba," the class of persons, which seems natural. In Zulu their two names are of the class yin-tin and dji-ma, respectively ; in Thonga they belong to the shi-psi class. This dissimilarity is indeed curious.

2) Categories of Ancestor-Gods.

Since every human being becomes a shikwembu after death, there are consequently many categories of these. What is the fate of little children? If they die in infancy no religious ceremony is performed over their grave, nor are any prayers offered to them. The twig rite (I. p. 142) only begins for children who have died at the age of puberty. Infants are, however, seen in the sacred woods amongst the adult gods. This is one of the points about

(1) The Vendas call the ancestor-gods *badzimo*, which is evidently the same word as the Sutho badimo. The Rev. Th. Schwellnus told me he thought that the etymology of this word was the verb dzima (in Thonga tima) which means to extinguish (Timula tora means to quench the thirst). The badzimo would thus be those who bring relief, who remove anguish. As this stem dzimo under various forms is widespread amongst the Bantu tribes to designate the ancestor-gods, it would be interesting to know if the corresponding verb dzima also exists and if this etymology is clearly established. The word *nʃimu*, sacred wood, in Thonga, may perhaps come from the same root.